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Young women risk chlamydia repeat

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Young women risk being infected with chlamydia more than once, researchers reported last week at a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conference in Jacksonville, Fla.

Chlamydia is the most common STD among women and, in 70% of cases, causes no symptoms. The bacterial infection can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy and infertility. It can also make a woman more likely to be infected with or to pass on the AIDS virus.

New York City Department of Health researchers Ellen Klingler and colleagues tested nearly 40,000 women in two studies, one in 2000 and another from 2003 to 2004. One in eight women diagnosed with chlamydia citywide had a repeat infection within a year and a third of these happened within three months.

The women younger than 19 were much more likely than women older than 25 to have been infected repeatedly, they found. A study of 400,000 women making routine doctor visits in California found similar rates.